

Measuring the impact of classmates on children's liking of school meals - DTU Orbit (08/11/2017)

Measuring the impact of classmates on children's liking of school meals

In this paper we investigate how children respond to a new type of school meal and ask whether classmates affect meal evaluations. The study is part of a school meal intervention which tested health effects of the New Nordic Diet. Over two separate three-month periods 834 pupils (age 8–11) from 9 schools (46 classes) were given either meals based on the Nordic diet or their usual packed lunch. The children rated their regular lunch packs and the Nordic meals on a five-point smiley scale when they reported their lunch intake. Ratings were done at home by the child, alone or with the help of a parent. The results show that the classmates influenced children's ranking of a new type of school meal but did not influence rankings of familiar lunch packs. These results are important not only because they add to our knowledge of the social dimension of liking, but also because they show that we should attend to social mechanisms when implementing new health-promoting food initiatives among children in schools.

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